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ABSTRACT

This paper is a review of research that focuses on the organization and management of instruction in classrooms and on social and emotional learning outcomes for students. The conceptual framework of the paper encompasses learners, teachers, and curriculum. The framework is intended to provide a useful format for the presentation of studies. The purpose of this paper is to gain insight into effective classroom contexts to promote social and emotional learning. Only studies specifically addressing the socio-emotional outcomes of schooling are reviewed. Studies published over the past quarter century and abstracted or cited in the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) or the PsycINFO databases are examined. The ERIC and PsycINFO databases were selected as representative of the core literature indexes in the areas of education and psychology. (Contains 121 references.) (JDM)

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Running Head: SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM ORGANIZATIONS

School and Classroom Organizations Affecting Social and Emotional Learning Outcomes

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Abstract

There is a substantial body of research indicating that the organization and management of classrooms can enhance or inhibit socio-emotional development. This paper reviews the literature to aid in understanding how various classroom contexts are related to students' social and emotional learning. It lays out an facilitative role for school psychologists because of their focus on the individual in the context of the classroom.

School and Classroom Organizations Affecting Social and Emotional Learning Outcomes

One reason to examine the impact of classroom contexts on social and emotional learning is the astonishing number of students experiencing problems in the social and emotional domains. Epidemiological data collected over the past decade suggest that 1 in 10 children and adolescents in the United States suffer social and emotional problems severe enough to interfere with their daily functioning (Institute of Medicine, 1994; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1999; National Institute of Mental Health, 2001). Yet fewer than 1 in 5 children and adolescents with social and emotional difficulties receive necessary services to address those problems either in or out of school (Center for Mental Health in Schools, 2001b; Knitzer, Steinberg, & Fleisch, 1991; National Institute of Mental Health, 2001; Roeser, 1998; Tuma, 1989; Weist, 1997). It is only through systemic efforts (not individual-level services) that the educational and socio-emotional needs of all students can be addressed (Kratochwill & Stoiber, 2000; Shapiro, 2000).

Socio-emotional learning involves skills necessary for navigating the social world, such as the ability to communicate effectively and to exert emotional self-control (Konstam, et al. 2000; Mayer & Cobb, 2000). Elias and colleagues (1997) identified the following characteristics as being associated with socio-emotional competence: confidence, creativity, purposefulness, self-discipline, caring, respect, tolerance, responsibility, peacefulness, forgiveness, reflectiveness, and thankfulness. Concern about socio-emotional learning has its historical roots in character education and in the affective

education movement that stemmed from the humanistic psychologies of Maslow and Rogers (Miller, 1976). Humanistic education models recommend that socio-emotional development be given prominence within the academic curriculum (Valett, 1977).

The classroom is a major socialization context. Yet few social and emotional skill development programs target teachers or classroom organization. Instead, the focus is on teaching social skills or emotional regulation to students who presumably have deficits in these areas. There are many programs directed toward the enhancement of the social and emotional outcomes of schooling through attempts to improve students' self-image and self-esteem irrespective of classroom contexts. This is often done through reinforcement programs or by trying to convince students that they are capable. Enhancing social and emotional outcomes, however, is not based on student self-perceptions but upon mastery in the classroom.

The Policy Leadership Cadre for Mental Health in Schools (Center for Mental Health in Schools, 2001b) as well as the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL, 2001) set forth new initiatives for enhancing students' assets and resiliency through an emphasis on socio-emotional learning in schools. They recognized a need to take an ecologically sensitive approach to studying important social and emotional variables.

Both theoretical foundations and research provide persuasive arguments that socio-emotional learning cannot be separated from the instructional mission of schools. Together they propose that students' social and emotional adjustment mediate their academic competence and resilience (Shapiro, 2000). Such a conjoint perspective of classroom contexts and socio-emotional learning parallels other ecological approaches to

understanding human development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Perry (1998) and Eccles and colleagues (Eccles & Midgley, 1989; Eccles, Wigfield, & Schiefele, 1998) have studied the role of cognition and the social-contextual determinants of achievement motivation. Research indicates that conditions in the classroom influence students' feelings about themselves. Some classroom organizations, for example those based on ability groups, can suggest to students that their ability (or inability) is a fixed personal deficit (Midgley & Edelin, 1998) leading them to think negatively of themselves. Students who view classroom contexts as ability-focused and competitive may engage in "self-handicapping" strategies, such as lack of effort or setting low expectations (i.e., defensive pessimism), as tactics to obscure ability factors when they experience academic difficulties (Garcia, Lisst, Matula, & Harris, 1996; Martin, Marsh, & Debus, 2001). How students are taught not only predicts academic achievement, but also the quality of interest in learning, social relationships, and their self-perceptions as learners (Perry & Weinstein, 1998).

By virtue of their training in psychology and education, school psychologists are expected to understand the social and emotional factors that enhance or interfere with positive academic development. They are also expected to be knowledgeable about interventions that are minimally intrusive and that promote system change. This shift in service delivery from individuals to systems challenges school psychologists to work in the context of general education and to collaborate with those responsible for instruction, namely classroom teachers (Shapiro, 2000). A critical research agenda for school psychologists is to explore how aspects of the classroom context relate to students' social and emotional learning (Kratochwill & Stoiber, 2000). Knowing more about how the

context of classrooms is related to students' social and emotional functioning would put school psychologists in a better position to consult with teachers, administrators, counselors, and parents.

This paper is a review of research that focuses on the organization and management of instruction in classrooms and on the social and emotional learning outcomes for students. The conceptual framework of the paper encompasses learners, teachers, and curriculum. This framework is intended to provide a useful format for the presentation of studies. The purpose of this paper is to review the knowledge base about classroom organization and management in order to gain insights into effective classroom contexts to promote social and emotional learning. Only studies specifically addressing the socio-emotional outcomes of schooling are included. The review concentrates on studies published over the past quarter century and abstracted or cited in the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) or the PsycINFO databases. These databases were selected as representative of the core literature indexes in the area of education and psychology.

Learners

In many elementary and secondary classrooms, grouping practices are used for instruction in various skill and content areas to deal with academic heterogeneity. These practices include age-graded, ability, collaborative, and gender groupings.

Age-Graded Grouping

Age-graded classroom contexts have endured for over 150 years in American education. Owens (1987) suggested that such contexts might be an important underlying reason for many problems in the U.S. education system. Age-graded organizational

structures assume: (1) that students of the same chronological age are ready to learn the same objectives; (2) that students require the same amount of time (an academic year) to master a predetermined content; and (3) that students can master predetermined objectives for a grade level for all curriculum areas at the same rate (Stainback & Stainback, 1984). Thus, conventional age-graded classroom contexts defy the reality of how children develop. In any classroom, there is likely a wide range of readiness, interests, abilities, and learning rates.

Pratt (1986) and Way (1981) explored the merits of multi-age or cross-grade classroom groupings in achievement and socio-emotional areas. No differences were found in achievement levels for children in multi-age and single-age classes; however, children in the multi-age groups had higher self-concept ratings. The general trend in studies of single and multi-age contexts is the finding of increased aggression and competition in single-age classrooms and greater harmony and acceptance in multi-age classrooms. In particular, younger and at-risk students seemed to benefit most from the greater range of social opportunities available in multi-age settings (Allen, 1989).

Several researchers (Allen, 1989; McClellan & Kinsey, 1997) studied students' prosocial, aggressive, and friendship patterns in mixed-age and same-age classrooms. Findings indicated a significant positive effect on first grade students' prosocial behavior as a result of participation in a mixed-age classroom context. Fewer students experienced social isolation in mixed-age classes. Teachers noted aggressive and negative behaviors significantly less often in mixed-age rather than same-age classrooms. Follow-up ratings the next year revealed that as second graders, those who had participated in the same-age

first grade classrooms were more likely to be rated by their current teachers as aggressive or disruptive.

Mixed-age classrooms are more realistic contexts mirroring work and community life where people of different ages interact and learn from each other. Importantly, teachers of mixed-age classes are more likely to view their students as diverse than as similar and to provide for individual needs (Lloyd, 1999).

Ability Grouping

Ability grouping, the practice of instructing students in groups according to academic performance and/or ability levels, is organized either "within" or "by" class. Within-class grouping refers to the practice in heterogeneous classrooms of regrouping students homogeneously for specific instruction during various times during the school day. When by-class grouping is employed, students performing at similar achievement levels are assigned to a particular class for the entire school day. Often referred to as "tracking," by-class grouping means that students move together from teacher to teacher. By-class grouping is commonly seen at the high school level. The distinction between within-class and by-class grouping is important because the term "grouping" is often equated with "tracking."

Passow (1988) noted "with the advent of group intelligence tests and standardized achievement tests around World War I, ability grouping became a commonplace practice by which schools attempted to cope with student diversity and provide for individual differences" (p. 205). Schools actually use a myriad of methods to determine ability groups for students besides aptitude and achievement tests (see Winn & Wilson, 1983). Teacher judgments are sometimes the sole criterion for grouping, often decided during

the first week of school. Placement in a high ability group has been attributed to behaving in a manner acceptable to the teacher. Even socio-economic and ethnic factors can influence ability grouping. Despite these findings, in today's classrooms, grouping continues to be the most common procedure to accommodate differences in rates of learning (Good & Stipek, 1983; Lou et al, 1996).

Grant and Rothenberg (1986) examined first-grade and second-grade classrooms using ability grouping. Their results showed the classroom contexts of the top groups to be characterized by fewer disruptions and a warmer socio-emotional atmosphere than the classroom contexts of the lower ability groups. They concluded that students in the top groups were advantaged by having classroom contexts that are more conducive to learning. Moreover, those classrooms allowed more opportunities to demonstrate competence and provided more practice with self-directed learning. Eder and Felmlee collaborated to study different attention patterns in low versus high ability first grade reading groups (Eder & Felmlee, 1984; Felmlee & Eder, 1983). After controlling for individual characteristics that included personal attention patterns, they found that students in low ability groups became inattentive at four times the rate of students in high ability groups. A noteworthy finding is that the effect became greater over time, revealing the impact of classroom context on student behavior. Eder and Felmlee further reported that first-grade teachers' expectations and use of management skills varied across groups: teachers of high ability groups quickly managed inattentiveness or disruption whereas teachers of low ability groups ignored those same behaviors. In addition, these researchers noted peer effects in that high ability groups applied pressure to maintain attention during interruptions whereas low ability group students view interruptions as

opportunities to divert attention from the task at hand. For elementary and junior high school students, Schwartz (1981) described consistent differences in the behavior observed in high and low ability groups. Behavior in low ability classes was notable for challenges to teacher authority, obstruction of academic activities, and misuse of educational resources. Findings such as these suggest that social influences in low ability groups may overwhelm any instructional advantages to grouping.

Lou and colleagues (1996) conducted a meta-analysis of studies concerning within-class grouping: one hundred sixty-five independent findings were considered. Overall, they reported small but positive effects of placing students in groups in classrooms. Students in grouped classes had significantly more positive attitudes toward school and higher self-concepts than students in ungrouped classes. However, these researchers acknowledge that studies consistently show deleterious socio-emotional effects from grouping for low ability students because of teachers' low expectations and the lack of appropriate social and behavioral role models.

The ethics of by-class tracking has been debated (Allan, 1991; Oakes, 1985). Issues focus on the problems of stigmatizing low ability students and of restricting their learning opportunities in homogeneous tracks. Conversely, others argue that it is unethical to limit the achievement of high ability students because the pacing and content of heterogeneous groups may be below their capacity. The literature on education for students with high academic ability tends to favor homogeneous grouping for both academic and socio-emotional development. Feldhusen and Moon (1992) contend socio-political concerns about elitism in American culture and education fuel arguments against homogeneous grouping for gifted and talented students. They conclude that research

findings indicate that heterogeneous grouping leads to lower motivation and poorer attitudes toward school among academically gifted and talented students. Shields (1996) reported statistically significant findings of positive socio-emotional learning outcomes favoring homogeneous grouping for a sample of gifted fifth-graders. Homogeneously grouped gifted students compared to heterogeneously grouped gifted students showed higher self-concepts, self-acceptance, and independence.

Ability grouping fosters the development of organizational substructures within a classroom, thereby producing different classroom contexts for different students (Gamoran, 1986). Students are aware of their placement at a certain ability level very early in their academic careers. Lower groups tend to develop antagonistic attitudes toward school. In its opposition to ability grouping, the National Association of School Psychologists position statement (1993; re-approved 1998) specifically addresses by-class "tracking," noting the negative effects on students' self-esteem and sense of academic competence. Recognizing that school psychologists are uniquely positioned to bridge the gap between educational and socio-emotional issues, NASP has charged its membership to assist with systemic reforms in de-tracking schools.

Collaborative Grouping

Largely in response to Vygotskian thinking that social interaction serves as a catalyst for intellectual growth (Vygotsky, 1962), there is now widespread interest in classroom contexts that facilitate peer interaction. Variously termed peer collaboration, cooperative learning, and peer tutoring, those classroom contexts differ somewhat in the demands for equality and mutuality in task engagement (Damon & Phelps, 1989).

Cooperative Learning. Educators have long known that collaboration among peers fosters academic achievement and socio-emotional development (Slavin, 1980; Sharan, 1980). Positive socio-emotional outcomes from cooperative learning include better attitudes toward learning, better self-concepts, better attitudes toward others, and better racial relationships (Bossert, 1988/1989; Slavin, 1990). Cooperative learning arrangements in regular classrooms can improve the self-perceptions of student with academic disabilities as well as their acceptance by classmates without disabilities (Madden & Slavin, 1983). The critical components of cooperative learning identified by the aforementioned researchers are the cooperative reward structures and peer instructional strategies. More recently, the focus of study has shifted to the composition of cooperative learning groups. Kenny and colleagues (1995) examined the effect of cooperative learning group composition on elementary students considered gifted and their non-gifted peers. Heterogeneous cooperative grouping had positive socio-emotional outcomes for the gifted students but negative outcomes in terms of lower self-esteem for the non-gifted students, presumably due to unfavorable social comparisons.

Peer Tutoring. Most studies of peer tutoring programs show positive academic, behavioral, and socio-emotional gains for both tutors and tutees of the same or different ages as well as for those with and without various learning problems. Students participating in peer tutoring programs are described as more cooperative, respectful, and tolerant toward peers and teachers. As well, they exhibit greater enthusiasm for learning and higher self-esteem (Cohen, Kulik, & Kulik, 1982; Eiserman, 1988; Franca, Keer, Reitz, & Lambert, 1990; Gensemer, 2000; Kamps, Barbetta, Leonard, & Delquadri, 1994;

Lazerson, Foster, Brown, & Hummel, 1988; Phillips, Fuchs, & Fuchs, 1994; Roswal et al, 1995).

Garcia-Vazquez and Ehly (1992) suggested that the effectiveness of tutoring in enhancing social influence and social acceptance among children might be explained by role theory. The tutoring role confers social status that in turn confers social power. Additionally, emotional gains may be realized from participation in a helping relationship. Raschke and colleagues (1988) reported positive socio-emotional outcomes for tutees such as changes in values, beliefs, and attitudes might be attributable to observing tutors as role models and by engaging in an interpersonal relationship.

Gender Grouping

There is a renewed debate about the desirability of single-gender versus coeducational schooling. The public consciousness has been raised by threatened closing of women's colleges, attempts to provide single-gender classrooms for inner city males, and the effort to compel traditionally all-male military schools to admit females. This section examines single-gender versus coeducational classroom contexts and socio-emotional learning outcomes.

Several studies have suggested that single-gender schooling has a positive impact on socio-emotional development for girls. The work of Lee and Bryk (1986) in analyzing the High School and Beyond data indicated that both boys and girls show higher academic achievement in single-gender schools and that, in particular, there are socio-emotional advantages for adolescent females. They reported that females had less stereotypical sex role expectations, had greater sense of internal locus of control, and had higher self-concepts. Eder's (1985) ethnographic study showed that the presence of boys

in middle school disrupts patterns of friendship and popularity among girls because of an overemphasis on physical appearance. Moreover, this "rating and dating" environment limits leadership roles for females. Jones and Thompson (1981) attributed their finding of teacher preferences for coeducational schooling as a function of greater ease in disciplining males when females are present in the classroom.

A report by the American Association of University Women (1992) summarizing 1,331 studies of females in schools from preschool through college raised concerns that coeducational classrooms foster gender inequities. The report reveals patterns of unequal support and attention when both genders are in the same classroom. Evidence of differential treatment included males being allowed to call out answers more often, being called upon to answer more often, being permitted to talk longer or challenge ideas presented in class, and being given more accurate and useful feedback. One study found that college professors were more likely to remember the names of male students in coed classes.

A few studies have examined single-gender classroom options within coeducational schools. Separating boys and girls for academic instruction benefited both groups in academic achievement, but especially females in math, and increased academic motivation (Evans, 1993; Fox, Brody, & Tobin, 1985; Richardson, 1995). In a study of Kindergarten students, Wright (1991) reported that Black males from homes without male role models made impressive academic gains and increased attendance in gender-segregated classes. Lyons (1990) discussed arguments both for and against separating high school classes by gender and race. Given the failure of schools to adequately educate young Black males, proposals for separate classes have received measured

support from Black educators. However, single-gender classes within coeducational public schools present legal issues in ensuring equivalent programs for both genders (Fischer, 1991), and certainly, classes separated by race open issues of segregation.

Most studies addressing gender grouping focus on the effects on female academic and socio-emotional development. Arguments for benefits to males have received significantly less attention and support. Mael (1998) suggested that single-gender education for females is seen as promoting equality whereas single-gender education for males is viewed as promoting inequality. Charges of sexism have to be countered in identifying benefits that might be seen as maintaining male social superiority.

Teachers

Classroom Management

It has been suggested that classroom management is an ongoing task that defines what it means to be a teacher. Good classroom management underlies all other instructional principles and includes the use of efficient routines, working without distraction, prevention of behavior problems, and smooth transitions (Rancifer, 1993). Emmer and Evertson (1982) defined classroom management as " . . . teacher behaviors that produce high levels of student involvement in classroom activities, minimal amounts of student behaviors that interfere with the teacher's or other students' work, and efficient use of instructional time" (p.342). Kounin (1983; also see Kounin & Sherman, 1979) studied classrooms as ecological entities rather than collections of individuals. He identified specific teacher behaviors required to successfully orchestrate large group activities, such as smoothness of presentation, establishing momentum, maintaining group focus, and exhibiting with-it-ness.

Work by Emmer, Everston, and Anderson (1980) indicated that the classroom contexts of effective managers are distinguishable from those of less effective managers by the degree to which the rules and procedures are integrated in a workable system and how effectively the system is taught to students. Effective classroom managers explained rules and procedures clearly, providing students with examples and reasons. They observed that effective managers spent considerable time during the first week of school explaining and reminding pupils of the rules and used a greater variety of rewards and signals for appropriate behavior. Further, during that initial phase, effective managers relied on whole group instruction, allowing students to become familiar with classroom procedures before requiring them to work independently. The investigators reported that although effective managers view teaching content as important, they stressed socialization into the classroom during the first few weeks of school. They described the classroom context as relaxed but work-focused. By the end of three weeks, these classes had acquired the management skills needed for the entire year.

Instructional Models

There is considerable research supporting the traditional explicit teaching or direct instruction model, particularly for promoting student achievement (Gersten & Keating, 1987; Rosenshine, 1986). Although direct instruction may favorably impact academic achievement, researchers have documented that students exhibit more stress in didactic classrooms than in student-centered contexts (Dunn & Kontos, 1997).

Open, non-traditional, or student-centered models have a greater positive impact on socio-emotional outcomes. When the classroom context is more open, students tend to be more creative, to have better self-concepts, to hold more positive attitudes toward

teachers and school, and to demonstrate greater independence and curiosity (Dunn & Kontos, 1997; Peterson, 1979; Reynolds, 1975). In open classroom contexts, performance is valued in many areas—art, music, drama—as well as math, science, and language. Since rewards are not based solely on academic achievement, students in open classrooms have more outlets to develop positive identities (Rothenberg, 1989).

Today, classroom contexts are rapidly changing with technological advances. Computers are profoundly reshaping students' school experiences. Cordes and Miller (2000) discussed some of the potential harm of computers to healthy socio-emotional development such as social isolation, detachment from the community, and frustration with computer-based instruction. An over-emphasis on computer literacy in classrooms may divert scarce resources away from meeting students' real socio-emotional needs in forming strong bonds with caring teachers. Thought needs to be given to the use of technology in classrooms to foster positive psychological contexts to enhance social and emotional learning.

Curriculum

Congruence of General and Special Education

Over the years, special education programs have expanded. One critical concern affecting socio-emotional adjustment is the criteria used to place students in such programs. Given the confusion that surrounds the diagnostic categorization of students, especially for students classified as learning disabled (Shepard, 1987; Wang, Reynolds, & Wahlberg, 1986), researchers have called for an elimination of separate programs for most learners in favor of comprehensive approaches that incorporate the best features of special and general education (Stainback & Stainback, 1984; 1987).

Often students with disabilities are placed in academic classroom contexts with the goal of reaping the social benefits. Parents and teachers of severely disabled students report increased acceptance, interactions, and friendships in inclusive settings. Morevoer, students without disabilities experience positive socio-emotional outcomes such as reduced fear of human differences, growth in social cognition, improvements in self-concept, development of moral and ethical codes, and capacity for caring (Hunt, Farren-Davis, Beckstead, Curtis, & Goetz 1994; Hunt & Goetz, 1997; Ryndak, Downing, Jacqueline, & Morrison, 1995; Staub & Peck, 1995).

Cook and Semmel (1999) summarized research findings to suggest that students with the most severe disabilities are generally the most accepted in inclusive settings. Their disabilities are readily apparent and the acceptance may be a function of both teachers and classmates holding uniformly decreased expectations. Teachers who hold high academic standards are likely to have a lower tolerance for children with disabilities (Hocutt, 1996). There is an extensive literature indicating that peer acceptance of students with severe disabilities is consistently higher than for students with mild disabilities in inclusive settings (see Swanson & Malone, 1992). Schmidt (2000) presented data that the self-report of social and emotional adjustment for 4th grade students with learning disabilities attending full-time special education classes were more positive than the self-reports of students with learning disabilities attending full-time regular classes.

A rush to inclusion for socialization purposes may prove problematic for some students. MacMillan, Gresham, and Forness (1996) cautioned that full inclusion needs to be defined carefully and interventions strategies need to be empirically validated. They and others (for example, Cartledge & Johnson, 1996; Wilczenski, 1993; 1995) point out

that students with socio-emotional and behavioral problems are difficult to include in general education classrooms. Existing evidence supporting full inclusion does not include children with socio-emotional and behavioral disorders (MacMillan, Gresham, & Forness, 1996).

Most studies do show some modest beneficial effect of inclusive education on socio-emotional outcomes for students with disabilities (Baker, Wang, & Walberg, 1995; Madden & Slavin, 1983). However, there is no compelling evidence that placement in special versus general education settings rather than specific instructional and social classroom contexts is the critical factor in student socio-emotional learning (Hocutt, 1996; Reganick, 1995). In comparing the sociability of preschool students with disabilities enrolled in inclusive and segregated classes, Sontag (1997) found that teacher prompting and encouragement made the difference in student's sociability in the two classroom contexts. The question is for whom and under what circumstances is a particular class suitable for an individual student. Successful inclusion requires encouraging socialization and providing emotional support for students with disabilities.

Congruence of General and Bilingual Education

Descriptions of bilingual education programs usually contain socio-emotional goals and arguments in favor of bilingual education are often based, in part, on socio-emotional considerations (Baral, 1983; Felice, 1981; Roberts, 1995). The difficulties involved in integrating socialization from two cultures underscores the importance of socio-emotional outcomes in bilingual education to foster academic resiliency. The ability of bilingual, bicultural persons to function effectively may be enhanced to the degree that socio-emotional issues of schooling are addressed. Felice (1981) reported

positive results of bilingual, bicultural Spanish programs in terms of how Mexican-American students felt about themselves, their families, and their heritage.

Studies of socio-emotional outcomes of bilingual education have produced mixed results. Varying definitions of bilingual education make comparisons difficult. Students often do not stay in bilingual programs continuously and often transfer to monolingual programs at various times. Typically, socio-emotional variables are operationalized in terms of self-concept or self-esteem, both social and emotional. The literature does show that bilingual education programs are more successful than monolingual programs in enhancing students' self-concepts, with the strongest support coming from studies at the elementary level (Baral, 1983; Diaz, 1983).

The rising tide of criticism against bilingual education generated the question of whether bilingual education is more effective than monolingual programs in promoting socio-emotional development. The question of socio-emotional outcomes of bilingual education, however, is quite complicated and may never be fully answered. It may be that poor socio-emotional adjustment in students who do not speak English results from their isolation in an English-speaking society. If so, then learning English may improve socio-emotional functioning. Learning two languages may be an advantage that leads to higher self-esteem. Several researchers (Pesner & Auld, 1980; Alexander & Baker, 1992) have noted positive socio-emotional effects for bilingualism, not bilingual education. A fruitful line for future research would be an examination of bilingual classroom contexts that are successful in promoting academic achievement, and how those contexts impact socio-emotional development and self-concept formation.

Conclusions

This review of the literature has pointed out how the context of the classroom influences social and emotional outcomes for students. The practical implication for school psychologists is a need to address classroom contexts that present barriers to social and emotional learning and to intensify their focus on the socio-emotional needs of students through classroom-based assessment and interventions. Assessment strategies need to capture the classroom context (Evertson & Burry, 1988; Wilczenski, Bontrager, Ventrone, & Correia, 2001). A role for school psychologists as classroom-focused facilitator is envisioned (Adelman & Taylor, 1999; Center for Mental Health in Schools, 2001a; Shapiro, 2000). When a teacher has difficulty working with a student, the first step is to address the problem within the regular classroom and perhaps to involve the home to a greater extent. Classroom-based efforts to facilitate learning through programmatic activities are enhanced by increasing teachers' effectiveness so they can account for a wider range of individual differences, foster a caring context for learning, and prevent or handle a wider range of problems when they arise. Such a focus is essential to increasing the effectiveness of regular classroom instruction, preventing socio-emotional problems, supporting inclusionary policies, and reducing the need for specialized services (Ames, 1992; Dooley, Wilczenski, & Torem, 2001; Reschly, 1988; 1990; Rosenfield, 1992; 1998; Shapiro, 2000). The role of a classroom-based facilitator is compatible with the training guidelines recently adopted by the National Association of Psychologists (2000).

The premise of this paper is that the structural context of the classroom influences students and produces certain social and emotional outcomes. Readers are cautioned that

this review, like other literature reviews, including mathematical meta-analyses, does not allow one to draw causal or explanatory inferences. The review is intended to raise awareness of our knowledge base for school psychologists in considering the impact of classroom contexts on the socio-emotional functioning of students and to assist in classroom-focused assessment and intervention. The salient issue remains: Classroom contexts affect socio-emotional adjustment and, therefore, an ecological perspective is a sound approach for understanding students and schooling.

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